

Message Text

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43

ACTION CU-03

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BUCHAREST 2076

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OEXC, RO
SUBJECT: FRIENDSHIP AMBASSADOR'S EXCHANGE

REF: (A) BUCHAREST 1834, (B) SOFIA 0772

1. FRIENDSHIP AMBASSADORS, A PRIVATE EXCHANGE BETWEEN AMBASSADORS FOR FRIENDSHIP AND ROMANIAN TOURIST OFFICE INVOLVING FOR THE MOST PART YOUNG AMERICAN AMATEUR CHORAL GROUPS WHICH COME TO ROMANIA. OVER 5,000 AMERICANS HAVE COME TO ROMANIA UNDER THIS EXCHANGE SINCE 1972. THE PROGRAM HAS BOTH CULTURAL EXCHANGE AND COMMERCIAL OVERTONES, PARTICULARLY THE LATTER FOR ROMANIAN NATIONAL TOURIST OFFICE (ONT). SOME ROMANIANS HAVE TRAVELED TO THE U.S. UNDER A VNMPLEX RECIPROCITY FORMULA WORKED OUT BY HARRY MORGAN, THE FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT OF AMBASSADORS FOR FRIENDSHIP. HE COMES TO ROMANIA TWO OR THREE TIMES YEARLY AND MAKES ALMOST ALL ARRANGEMENTS HIMSELF, AND WITH HIS STAFF. THE PROGRAM HAS NOT TO OUR KNOWLEDGE RECEIVED ANY USG FINANCIAL SUPPORT ALTHOUGH THE EMBASSY HAS GIVEN ASSISTANCE WHENEVER NECESSARY AS WE SEE THESE YOUTH EXCHANGES OF SOME VALUE. ON BALUBCE, WE FEEL THE PROGRAM MAKES A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO U.S.-ROMANIAN CONTACTS.

2. HDLMOST EVERY SUMMER SINCE 1972, EMBASSADORS FOR FRIENDSHIP GROUPS HAVE PERFORMED IN ONE LARGE
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GROUP FOR PRESIDENT AND MRS. CEAUSESCU AT THEIR BLACK SEA

SUMMER RETREAT. LAST SUMMER, A GROUP OF SEVERAL HUNDRED FRIENDSHIP AMBASSADORS PERFORMED IN BUCHAREST FOR CEAUSESCU AND HIGH PARTY AND GOVERNMENT LEADERS EG AN EVENT WHICH WAS GIVEN FRONT PAGE COVERAGE IN THE PARTY DAILY (SCINTEIA). THE GROUP ALSO SANG THE ROMANIAN NATIONAL ANTHEM DURING THIS PERFORMANCE WHICH WAS ALSO CARRIED ON THE TV EVENING NEWSCAST. ACCORDINGLY, THE PROGRAM HAS HIGH LEVEL ACCEPTANCE HERE AS FURTHER EVIDENCED BY THE FACT THAT MINISTER OF TOURISM PRESENTED A GOR DECORATION TO HARRY MORGAN IN EARLY 1975.

3. WE ARE POUCHING ADDITIONAL INFO ABOUT THE PROGRAM INCLUDING A MEMORANDUM ABOUT A GROUP OF ROMANIANS WHO PERFORMED AT THE WHITE HOUSE FOR PRESIDENT FORD UNDER THE AUSPICES OF AMBASSADORS FOR FRIENDSHIP AND OTHER COVERAGE OF THAT EVENT IN OUR USIA CORE MAGAZINE INSERT.

3. WE HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE OF SPECIFIC GROUPS IN WHICH BULGARIAN CULTURAL ATTACHE IS CURRENTLY INTERESTED. WILL ADVISE AS WE RECEIVE MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS SUMMER'S PROGRAMS.
BARNES

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